

For Immediate Release: October 8, 2010

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Republicans want to eliminate criminal justice funds for Dakota County, Gateway Corridor funds for Washington County, and \$2 million for Minnesota veterans

St. Paul, MN – In a letter to U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi dated October 8, 2010, more than 50 Republicans, including Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH) and Rep. John Kline (R-MN), called for an elimination of congressionally directed projects (earmarks) from any appropriations bills to pass the House following the November 2nd election. The Republican proposal to eliminate these projects from the fiscal year 2011 appropriations bills would reduce federal funding to Minnesota by millions of dollars and cripple vital jobs and infrastructure projects like the Central Corridor LRT between St. Paul and Minneapolis.

As Minnesota's only member of the Appropriations Committee, Congresswoman Betty McCollum called the Republican proposal a clear indication of their disdain for federal investments that will create jobs and keep our communities strong and growing.

"For Republicans – including a Minnesota Republican – to call for eliminating funding for the Central Corridor earmark and the thousands of jobs will hurt Minnesota and make our state less competitive. Additionally, this proposal cuts earmarked funding for Dakota County criminal justice projects and the Minnesota National Guard's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program – projects that impact my district and my Republican colleague's district," McCollum said.

Republicans aggressively support adding to the federal debt to make permanent Bush-era tax cuts for the richest 2 percent of Americans costing \$700 billion, yet want to eliminate \$3 billion in high-impact community investments, which are .17% of the federal budget. This includes projects such as \$2 million for the Minnesota National Guard's Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Program to assist with support and reintegration for our military personnel and \$500,000 for the Dakota County Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative which makes our community safer and saves money for taxpayers.

Even worse, this Republican letter unfairly tarnishes the reputations of respected non-profit entities in Minnesota such as Dakota and Ramsey counties, the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota National Guard by claiming their participation in the earmark process is corrupt and part of a "spoils system."

"It is amazing to me that the same Republicans who defend the corruption of Wall Street CEOs can accuse my neighbors who are honorable public servants, elected officials and community leaders from the Minnesota National Guard, Dakota, Washington and Ramsey Counties of participating in a corrupt process. Congressional appropriations are an open, transparent process, providing real benefits to Minnesota. Minnesotans pay their taxes, but the Republicans want to cheat them of receiving the benefits of their tax dollars. I suggest that these Tea Party Republicans actually read the U.S. Constitution, particularly Article I to learn that Congress has the Constitutional responsibility to fund the government," said McCollum.

Democrats reformed the earmark process inherited from Republicans in 2007 by cutting the number and amount of earmarks funding in half, and instituting new transparency requirements which allows the public to see requests online.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum

Congressionally-directed funding secured in House Appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2011

(Final appropriation levels subject to House-Senate conference)

Central Corridor Light Rail construction
Metropolitan Council
\$45,000,000

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
Minnesota National Guard
\$2,000,000

Life, Health, and Safety Building Improvements
Harriet Tubman Domestic Violence Center East
\$600,000

Gateway Corridor (Interstate 94) Transit Corridor planning
Washington County
\$750,000

Job Training and Mentoring Program
Preservation Alliance of Minnesota
\$100,000

Minnesota Hands and Voices Program Expansion to reach underserved and minority
communities - hearing loss early intervention
Lifetrack Resources
\$400,000

Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiatives
Dakota County
\$500,000

Criminal Justice Information Integration Network
Dakota County
\$300,000

Children's Physical Therapy Pool
Gillette Children's Hospital
\$600,000

Runaway Intervention Project
Ramsey County Attorney
\$200,000

Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) Disease Control and Eradication Program
University of Minnesota
\$246,000

City of Maplewood Gerten Pond Improvements
City of Maplewood
\$1,000,000

Voyageurs National Park
Voyageurs National Park Association
\$366,500

Upper Mississippi River Restoration
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District
\$21,150,000

Infrastructure and Capacity Enhancements
AccountAbility Minnesota
\$205,000

Renaissance Box Restoration Historic Preservation and Energy Efficiency Improvements
Aeon
\$350,000

Upper Midwest Industrial Coating Training Program
Minnesota Finishing Trades Training Fund
\$400,000

Mille Lacs Regional Dialysis Center
Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe
\$1,300,000

Bus acquisition and facilities for Riverview Corridor
Ramsey County
\$750,000

[Click here to visit Congresswoman McCollum's appropriations web page](#)

Congresswoman Betty McCollum serves on the House Appropriations and Budget Committees.

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